

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**Mitchell Area Adjustment Training Center
Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2004-2005**

Team Members: Peggy Mattke, Special Education Program Representative

Dates of On Site Visit: June 1, 2005

Date of Report: June 3, 2005

This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by Special Education Programs. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

Promising Practice	The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
Meets Requirements	The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
Needs Improvement	The district/agency has met this requirement but has identified areas of weakness that left unaddressed may result in non-compliance.
Out of Compliance	The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.
Not applicable	In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

Principle 1 – General Supervision
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General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

Meets requirements

The reviewer found the Mitchell Area Adjustment Training Center meets the requirements in all areas of general supervision. The Mitchell Area Adjustment Training Center does not systematically engage in surveying the community to identify individuals in need of service, but rather acts as an information referral source for individual inquires. There are no agency students enrolled in private schools.

Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education
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All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3rd birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

Meets requirements

It is the responsibility of school districts to provide a free appropriate public education to students from birth to age 21 within their attendance boundaries. Through interview and file reviews the reviewer found that, three students are attending both school and participating in MAATC programs. Of those three, two students receive vocational/employment services and one student receives employment and residential services. Three students receive vocational/employment services only. Five students receive vocational/employment services and residential services. The agency has not suspended or expelled a student for more than 10 school days.

Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

Meets requirements

The agency conducts comprehensive assessments annually for all individuals at Mitchell Area Adjustment Training Center. MAATC administer assessments that include vocational, job development, residential, life quality/satisfaction, or other assessments determined by the team. The agency indicated they do not conduct the reevaluation of students for determination of eligibility for special education. However, the agency assists the student with anything that is needed such as transportation, supports, relaying background/social history information, strengths, areas of need, etc.

Needs Improvement

Through interview and a review of student records the monitor determined the 25 day timeline for evaluations is not consistently met. Assessments are determined at the previous year's ISP with input from the person, parents and all other team members, and completed prior to the ISP/IEP meeting.

Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

Meets requirements

The agency has procedures within the comprehensive plan which meet the requirements of surrogate parent appointments. The agency comprehensive plan has policies and procedures for responding to complaint and due process hearings.

Out of compliance

ARSD 24:05:30:05 Content of notice The notice must include the following:

- (1) A description of the action proposed or refused by the district, an explanation of why the district proposes or refuses to take the action, and a description of any other options the district considered and the reasons why those options were rejected;
- (2) A description of each evaluation procedure, test, record, or report that the district uses as a basis for the proposal or refusal;
- (3) A description of any other factors which are relevant to the district's proposal or refusal;
- (4) A statement that the parents of a child with a disability have protection under the procedural safeguards of this article and, if this notice is not an initial referral for evaluation, the means by which a copy of a description of the procedural safeguards can be obtained; and
- (5) Sources for parents to contact to obtain assistance in understanding the provisions of this article.

Through a review of student files and interviews with staff, the reviewer found the agency does not provide a complete prior notice to parents/adult students when initiating evaluations. Assessments are determined at the previous year's ISP with input from the person, parents, and all other team members, and completed prior to the ISP/IEP. While the meeting does serve to alert parents and students to the activity, it does not address all the requirements of giving appropriate prior notice.

Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

Meets requirements

Mitchell Area Adjustment Training Center meets requirements with respect to annual IEP meetings, IEP membership and IEP content.

Promising Practice

Each case manager at MAATC has no more than three files/cases, which affords the students with more one on one time with their case manager. Each case manager had also been employed at MAATC for over eight plus years. This gave clients a consistency in their program working with the same case manager year after year.

Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

Meets Requirements

Mitchell Area Adjustment Training Center meets all requirements with respect to least restrictive environment. Reviewer toured the facility and observed the programs available such as contracted work for local businesses that included mailings, woodshop that made pallets, and pulleys. Placement for the students is appropriate for their needs at this facility.

Promising Practice

The agency has done a wonderful job including disabled peers with non-disabled peers. MAATC provides supervised housing in the community that also includes a rented apartment that is an office for clients. If a client needs assistance at his/her apartment an agency staff from the office in the apartment complex is there to assist the client immediately. MAATC also allows clients to do extensive volunteer work in the community examples include Salvation Army bell ringing at Christmas, ushering at the community theater, and MAATC clients puts on a luncheon for public workers which include police and public transportation people. Clients also have a cookie distribution where they make and deliver cookies to doctor's offices, dentist offices and the fire department. MAATC has built relationships with the community to establish support for all the various activities the clients participate in.